

The University of Moses— The Faithfulness Principle

Numbers 12:6-8

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Numbers 12:1–9

Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Cushite woman whom he had married, for he had married a Cushite woman. ² And they said, “Has the Lord indeed spoken only through Moses? Has he not spoken through us also?” And the Lord heard it. ³ Now the man Moses was very meek, more than all people who were on the face of the earth. ⁴ And suddenly the Lord said to Moses and to Aaron and Miriam, “Come out, you three, to the tent of meeting.” And the three of them came out. ⁵ And the Lord came down in a pillar of cloud and stood at the entrance of the tent and called Aaron and Miriam, and they both came forward.

Numbers 12:1–9

⁶ And he said, “Hear my words: If there is a prophet among you, I the Lord make myself known to him in a vision; I speak with him in a dream. ⁷ Not so with my servant Moses. **He is faithful in all my house.** ⁸ With him I speak mouth to mouth, clearly, and not in riddles, and he beholds the form of the Lord. Why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?” ⁹ And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them, and he departed.

During the 40 years that he led the people of Israel, Moses faced several challenges to his authority. This one came from his brother **Aaron**, the high priest, and his sister **Miriam**, a prophetess.

Although their initial remarks concern Moses' Cushite wife, that was a pretense. Nothing is known about Moses' Cushite wife. She may be the same person as Zipporah, but more likely was a second wife from Ethiopia.

But Moses' Cushite wife was not the real issue.



The real issue was their challenge to Moses' supreme authority.



**"Has the LORD indeed spoken only through Moses?
Has he not spoken through us also?"**
(Num. 12:2)

God himself sorts out this challenge to Moses by summoning the three of them to the Tent of Meeting.

God points out his unique relationship with Moses in a **chiasmus**—a kind of Hebrew poem—that sets Moses apart from ordinary prophets, who receive their revelations in visions and dreams.

In striking contrast, God speaks to Moses directly in conversation.



God expresses his displeasure with Aaron and Miriam's challenge to his prophet and affirms Moses' position by temporarily striking Miriam with leprosy, then healing her through Moses' intercession for her.



The Lord's words about Moses form a chiasmus, a rhetorical structure that puts an emphasis on the center line where Moses is named.

The statement is emphatic: **Moses is faithful in all God's house.**

A	If there is a prophet of the LORD among you,
B	I make myself known to him in a vision;
C	In a dream I speak with him.
D	Not so my servant Moses;
D'	In all my household he is my confidant.
C'	Mouth to mouth I speak with him,
B'	Face to face and not in riddles;
A'	The likeness of the LORD he beholds.

*Moses' life demonstrated the faithfulness principle:
put your trust in God and give God good reason to put
his trust in you.*

1. What is faithfulness?

The heart of the OT and NT words for *faith* is the idea of **firmness or certainty**.

The biblical idea of faith or belief is to accept the truth of a person (usually God) or a reality on the basis of the proven reliability of the person or object you believe in.

Applied to people, like Moses, to be **faithful** is to be reliable, worthy of trust, consistent in your duty, or loyal.

SENSES

to endure (persist)

faithful

to be assured

to be confirmed

to trust

firm

to be trustworthy

to be established (abstractly)

to believe (trust)

to believe (accept)

to be faithful

אמן

wearing

to be faithful

11 of 96

verb. to be trusting and to show loyalty to another (includes obedience in regards to a deity).

אמן 1

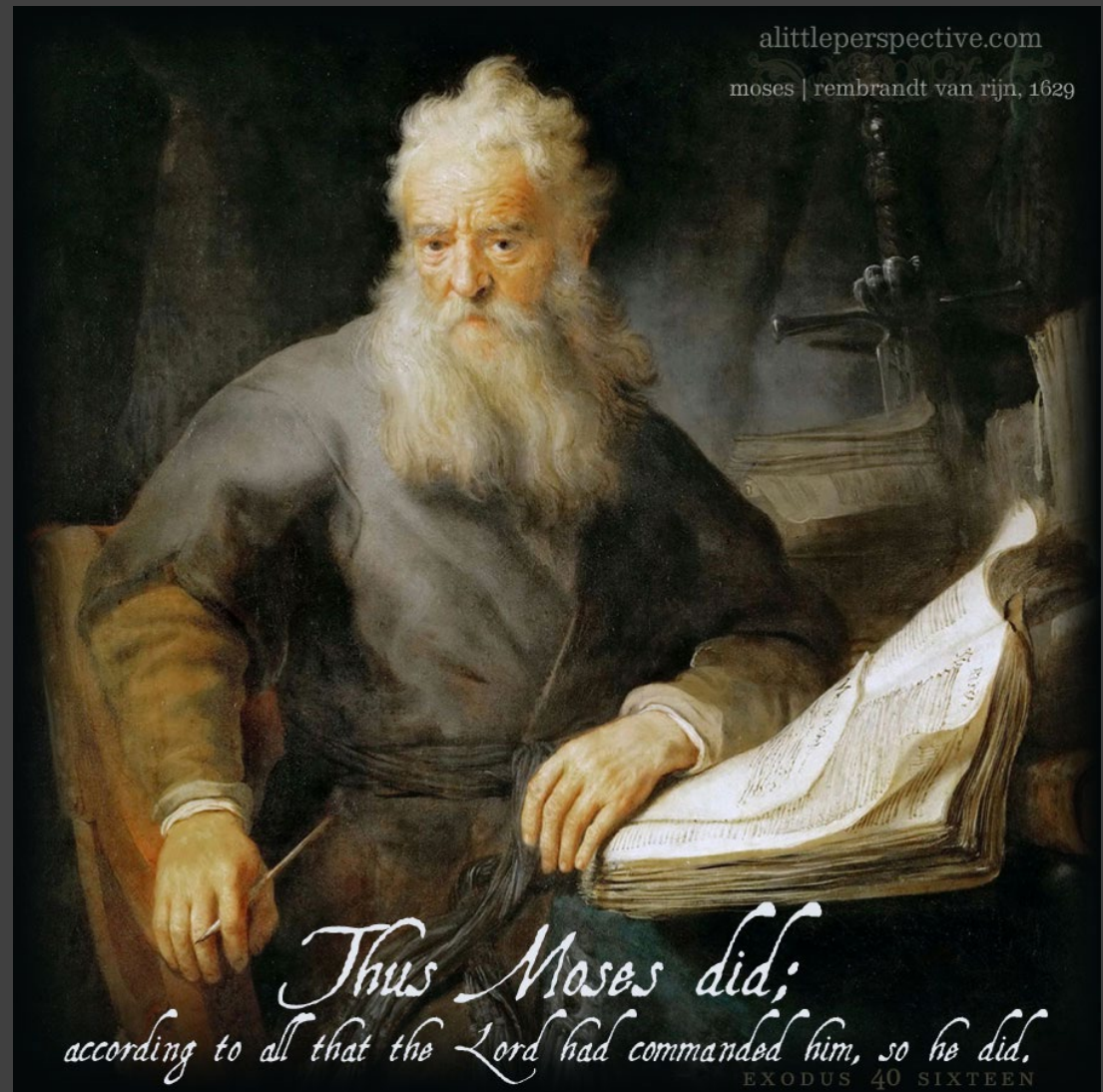
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Nu 12:7

Not so with my servant Moses. He is faithful in all my house.

In Numbers
12:7, God says of
Moses: “He is
faithful in all my
house.”

Exodus 40:16
records: “**Moses**
did everything just
as the LORD
commanded him.”





The phrase “as the Lord commanded Moses” appears 51 times in the Old Testament to describe something Moses led the Israelites to do.

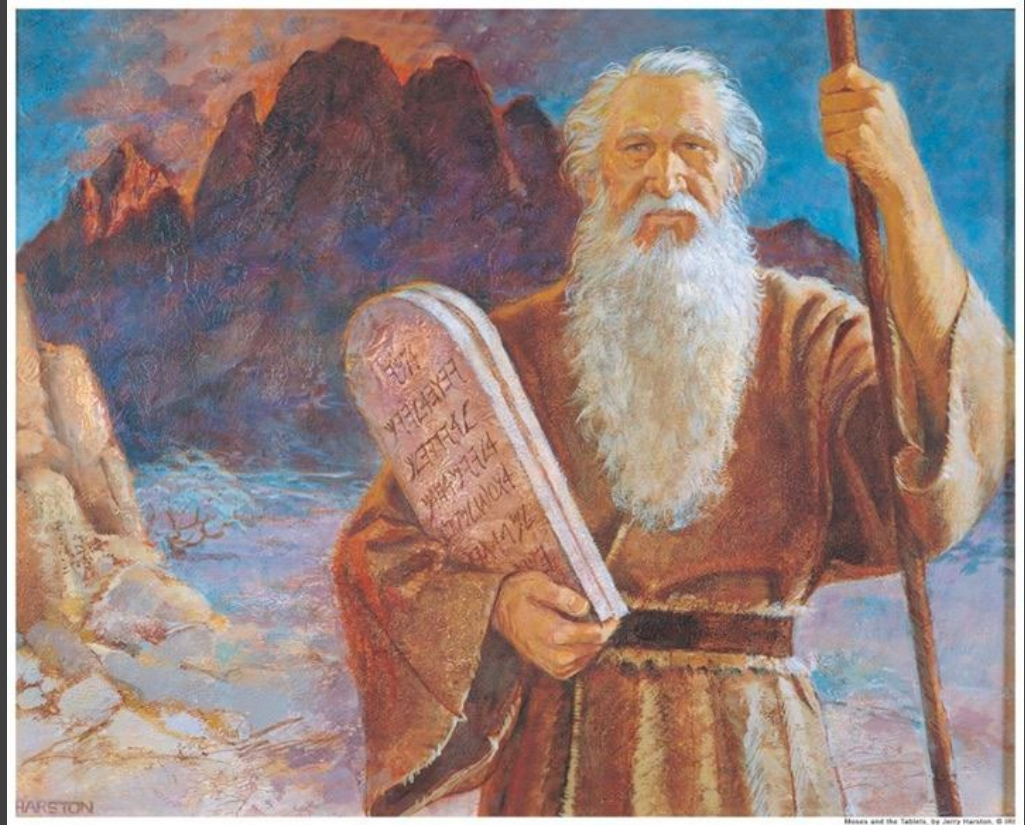
Moses wasn't a perfect man. He wasn't permitted to enter the Promised Land himself because in anger he struck the rock at Meribah to draw water for the Israelites instead of speaking to it as God had commanded.

But that angry moment was an exception to a life characterized by **believing whatever God said and doing whatever God told him to do.**



Moses practiced
consistent,
persevering
obedience to the
word and will of God.

Moses had faith in
God, and he gave God
good reason to have
faith in him.



Moses and the Tablets, by Henry Harston, © 2011

2. The faithfulness of Moses is a model for us.

Hebrews 3:5–6

⁵ Now **Moses was faithful** in all God's house as a servant, to testify to the things that were to be spoken later, ⁶ but **Christ is faithful** over God's house as a son. And we are his house, if indeed we **hold fast our confidence and our boasting in our hope.**



FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Galatians 5:22-23

“...is faithfulness ...”

3. How should we be faithful?

We can be faithful in *worship and fellowship* by being in the Lord's house with the Lord's people every Lord's Day.



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ARE YOU FAITHFUL?

Do you apply the same standards of faithfulness to your Christian activities that you expect from other areas of your life?

If your **car** starts once every three tries, is it reliable?

If your **mail** carrier skips delivery every Monday and Thursday, is he trustworthy?

If you don't go to **work** once or twice a month, are you a loyal employee?



ARE YOU FAITHFUL?

If your **refrigerator** stops working for a day or two every now and then do you say, “Oh, well, it works most of the time”?

If your **water heater** provides an icy-cold shower every now and then is it dependable?

If you miss a couple of loan payments every year, does the **bank** say, “Ten out of twelve isn’t bad”?



If you fail to worship God one or two Sundays a month, would you expect to be called a faithful Christian?

We expect faithfulness and reliability from things and other people. Does not God expect the same from us?



We can be faithful in both private and small group *Bible study and prayer*.

Psalm 119:11—“I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.”

Psalm 1:1-2—“Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.”

Colossians 4:2—“ Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful



We can be faithful through *loving service in a ministry* consistent with our gifts, temperament, and passion.

1 Peter 4:10—“Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.”



DOES CHRIST HAVE ALL OF YOU?

William Booth was born in Nottingham, England in 1829. As a boy of 15 he was apprenticed to a pawnbroker. When he was 20 he moved to London to work in a pawn shop in one of the poorer sections of the city. He developed a profound hatred for the dirt, squalor, and suffering he saw there and made up his mind that he would make his life count for Christ by taking pity on the outcast people around him. At the age of 23 he became a Methodist preacher and later founded the Salvation Army.

Of his commitment to Christ, Booth once said: "When I got the poor of London on my heart and caught a vision of what Jesus Christ, the reigning Lord, could do with those people, though I knew there were many men with greater training, greater wisdom, greater intelligence, greater power than William Booth, **I was determined that the living Christ would have all of William Booth that there was.**"



Does Christ have all that there is of you?”